

The American College of Surgeons

Surgery Interest Group Success Story

Chicago Medical School - Rosalind Franklin University

Surgery Interest Group

The Surgery Interest Group (SIG) at Chicago Medical School (CMS) has been actively working to expand opportunities for our members that will result in greater exposure within the field of surgery, and more readily prepare them for their surgical clerkships. Additionally, we have been working other groups on campus to raise awareness of various public health issues affecting us at both a local and national level. This has been accomplished through participation in The Stop the Bleed Campaign, Scrubs Addressing the Firearm Epidemic (SAFE) initiative, as well as hosting speaking events highlighting local surgeons who are combating these issues on a daily basis.

Our SIG recognizes the lack of opportunities for first and second year medical students to gain exposure to the field of surgery during the didactic years, so we strive to bridge that gap through workshops focusing on a variety of surgical techniques. In addition to already hosting suture and knot tying clinics lead by our surgeon mentor, Dr. Michael Zdon MD FACS, we recently expanded these clinics to include the use of laparoscopic simulation boxes. The opportunity for students to drive the camera, learn and practice with laparoscopic instruments, and gain early exposure to this unique world can provide invaluable experience for students before they ever step foot into an OR. In addition to the expansion of our current workshops, we recently held our first ever aseptic technique workshop. While the use of various instruments and being skilled in suturing is of course a vital part of any surgeon's day, the ability to do so while maintaining sterility is equally, if not more important. It is because of this we felt the necessity to host our first aseptic technique workshop in which students learned the basics of a wet scrub, a dry scrub, open gloving, how to properly don and doff, and the importance of maintaining a "sterile conscious" and how that can affect patient outcomes. Furthermore, the curriculum at our school requires all second year students to participate in a preceptorship with a local physician. While the specialty of the physician is usually randomly assigned, our executive board worked with the administration at both CMS and the local VA to allow two students to work with general surgeons to fulfill this requirement. This was the first time the opportunity to work with a surgeon was offered to students during this preceptorship, in the future we hope to expand this to include more students within our SIG.



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Being in the Chicagoland area we are constantly bombarded with reports of the crippling rates of gun violence that plague our neighborhoods. It is because of this our SIG felt it was pertinent to participate in multiple events that focused on bringing these issues to the forefront of discussion, while helping combat them in a positive and evidence-based manner. We started by hearing from Dr. Peter Bendix, a local trauma surgeon who works on Chicago's south side where daily he experiences the direct impact this violence has on our city. He discussed how through the use of hospital based interventions, we can start to address the underlying issues that propagate violence through our community. Next, we participated in the nationwide movement Scrubs Addressing the Firearm Epidemic (SAFE). On September 17th you could find providers and students throughout the nation wearing a scrub top with the SAFE logo printed on them. The goal of this movement was to raise awareness and start conversation surrounding the need for through research, education, and support of evidence- based policy, in order to determine how best to arm our patients with facts and information that allow them to make the most informed decisions surrounding firearms. Our group worked together with two other groups on campus to support and promote this important movement. Finally, we helped support an interprofessional Stop the Bleed training that taught Basic Bleeding Control (B-Con) that aimed to inform our participants about proper tourniquet placement and wound packing. This coincided nicely with the university wide roll out of emergency bleeding control kits that can now be found throughout our school near the portable AEDs.

Our group has been working tirelessly to provide valuable experiences to our members, while supporting and educating to the needs of our community. As the year moves forward we have plans to continue our involvement on both a local and national level, and will strive to provide the most meaningful learning environment for all our members.

